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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE fourteenth session of the Indian National Congress, which began at Madras on Wednesday, synchronises usefully enough with the arrival of the new Viceroy in India. The late Mr. George Curzon belonged to the "Imperialist" party, as people have agreed to call the party which desires to expand the Empire even at the risk of bursting it, and the temper of the "Imperialist" party towards the Congress is notorious. If one's whole aim is to enlarge the circumference one does not trouble much about the contents of a circle. The Congress is the institution which more than any other makes for unity in India; therefore the "Imperialist" hates it. It has been brought into existence by English education in India, and could not have been brought into existence by any other means; therefore the "Imperialist" distrusts it. It consists of the most loyal subjects of the Crown in India—men as fitted by education as they are inclined by disposition to act as interpreters between the dumb millions of their fellow-countrymen and an alien Government with whose permanence their interests are inextricably bound up; therefore the "Imperialist" abuses it. To him the criticisms offered by the Congress are so much perilous sedition, and its suggestions conceited twaddle. That is, roughly, the standpoint of the party which Mr. Curzon has left behind him.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston, as a rather protracted series of farewell speeches has explained, is a very different being. He is not content to reproduce the sneers of the slighter organs of the jingo school. "The glaring and well-nigh solitary eminence upon which the Viceroy of India stands" requires a more dutiful and judicial frame of mind. "If I were asked," he said at the Royal Societies' Club on November 7, "what appears to me to be the secret of the proper treatment of Oriental races, I should reply that it consists in treating them as if they were men of like composition with ourselves." "If I were asked," he said at Derby on November 25, "what are the two qualities which appear to me to be the most essential for the adequate discharge of my duties, I should reply 'courage and sympathy'." And it was in a like vein of not unconscious virtue that he reflected (December 2) that "in all matters connected with India the point of view of duty and of obligation is paramount," and yet again (October 28), "I know I have everything to learn: I have perhaps many things to unlearn." It may fairly be claimed that the new Viceroy should without delay observe these excellent maxims in his treatment of the Congress. Let him come to it with courage and sympathy, with a sense of duty and obligation, with a disposition to learn and to treat educated Indians as men of like composition with himself, and he will not go empty away.

We print elsewhere a telegram from our Calcutta correspondent stating that a crowded and representative meeting of Calcutta ratepayers under the distinguished presidency of Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, has adopted a memorial against the Calcutta Municipal Bill. The probable effects of this ill-starred measure, if passed into law, are thus described by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*:—

> No ratepayer will probably go to elect a commissioner who, by the proposed change, will be reduced to a cypher; nor will any commissioner care to stand for the honour of being elected. Now there is keen canvassing; but the "reform" will make the ratepayers absolutely indifferent as to the result of the elections. The entire body of "representatives" will have to be recruited from other communities than the Hindu, and possibly the Mussalman. It is quite possible that a few *apkawastes* would be induced to come forward to stand.

This is one of the worst features of the Bill—it will eliminate the real workers and leaders of the people from the municipal council, men who have worked honestly and zealously during the past 22 years. Without their help and co-operation the efficient administration of a great city will be enormously difficult if not impossible. Even the *Hindu Patriot* has taken alarm at the Bill in its present shape, and opposes it as strongly as the other Bengal journals.

It is usual for those who are engaged in the kindly task of withdrawing municipal self-government from the Indians to belaud the happy days when every municipality in India had its official chairman. Now it so happens that six municipalities still possess that great safeguard, and of these none has been more praised in Government reports than that of Agra. As the *Pioneer* says:—"The control of the municipal administration in Agra has thus been virtually retained in the hands of the Government." It is therefore some surprise to find that following an adverse report by the auditor the Board "has failed to rise to the level of the duties imposed on it . . . has allowed arrangements to continue which facilitated, even encouraged, malversation of funds;" and is called upon "to show cause why it should not be superseded for such time as the Government may think necessary"—just as if it had some worthless non-official chairman. The auditor had said that the "bankrupt condition of the municipality was mainly due to Government in its zeal for hygienic reform having laid on the town in sanitation schemes a burden heavier than it could bear." But if it had only had an Indian chairman this would not have prevented its difficulties being used to point the moral of the unfitness of the Indians for local self-government.

We printed in our last issue the text of the official notice (dated November 19) requiring Indian traders in the Transvaal to proceed to specified locations for residence and trade before January 1 next. The notice provided however that those who for a considerable period have carried on business in places other than the locations might have either three months' or six months' grace at the discretion of the Landdrost or the Mining Commissioner. It is now stated that the date at which the notice is to take effect has been postponed from January 1 to February 1, while the *Times* of Monday last published a telegram dated December 24 from its Johannesburg correspondent, containing this passage:—

> The Executive have issued a circular suspending the eviction of Asiatics pending negotiations for a different settlement.

We hope this may be taken to mean that the "friendly representations" which Mr. Chamberlain undertook to make are by way of producing substantial results. The Colonial Office cannot wholly undo the mischief which its past compliance has permitted. But Mr. Chamberlain may well be stimulated by the warning examples of some of his predecessors.

An important point is to be made from the judgments of the three judges who heard the famous "test case" last August. In this case an Indian trader sought an order of Court declaring that the Transvaal Government acted illegally in requiring him to remove his business to a location. The question for decision, as we have already explained, was whether the term "habitation" included "business place" as well as "residence." Two of the judges—Mr. Justice Morice and Mr. Justice Esser—gave judgment for the Government. But Mr. Justice Jorissen

gave judgment for the plaintiff in these clear and emphatic terms :—

So far as I am concerned the question must be decided by the existing law. In the Volksraad Resolution of July 5, 1888, a sharp and clear distinction is drawn between "residence" and "business place," and instructions were given to the Government to see that the Coolies did not reside or sleep on their business premises. The plaintiff's claim must therefore be allowed with costs.

In this connexion we may perhaps recall our reminder (INDIA, December 16, p. 316) that the Convention of London itself expressly discriminates between liberty (*a*) to enter, travel or reside, (*b*) to hire or possess houses, and (*c*) to carry on commerce. Moreover, it is to be noted that Mr. Justice Morice said in his judgment: "I should probably have decided in favour of the plaintiff if the case were *res integra*." He held himself bound by the decision in the case of Ismail Sulieman and Co. Yet "this case," according to Mr. Justice Jorissen, "cannot possibly serve as a precedent." Here surely is excellent material for "friendly representations."

The text of the Volksraad Resolution referred to above was cited by Mr. Justice Morice as follows :—

The Raad being of opinion that it would be prejudicial to the stability of proper sanitary regulations to allow the races alluded to in Law No. 3 of 1885 to reside in business premises not situated in a location, having good grounds for believing that this rule is not being observed; and being of opinion that the non-observance of such rule is contrary to the spirit and letter of the said law, resolves to instruct the Government to investigate the matter and if possible prohibit residence in such places of business.

Decidedly a "sharp and clear distinction" between "residence" and "places of business."

Another point brought out by recent papers from Johannesburg is the fact that the interests of some of the important European merchants and of the great body of the consumers are with the Indian traders, while many burghers are also friendly. In the interval which has now been secured it might be well if the Indians worked up this friendly influence and secured the presentation of petitions in their favour by their European clients, pointing out that their exclusion would remove a healthy competition and benefit a few at the expense of the many. Some petitions of this kind, as the Blue-book shows, have already been presented; but more would do no harm.

The admirers of Lord Curzon, who have connected his name with a project for "the conquest and annexation of Tibet," will be edified by the criticisms of the *Times of India* and the *Pioneer*, which see eye to eye on the subject. The former calls it a "fantasy," "an extraordinary scheme," "cold-blooded buccaneering," and a "perilous exploit," and can discern no reason of strategy, military glory, commerce, or anything else in its favour. The latter heads its article "A Wild-Cat Scheme of Annexation," and is so staggered at the suggestion as to be unable to believe that it has been taken up in responsible quarters. The *Englishman*, however, as we noted last week, is pining for another sensation. Here, it says, is a "most important scheme," a "movement now taking shape;" and when it reads Major Waddell's "clear and forcible presentation of the case for a bold policy on our Northern, as distinguished from our North-Western frontier, one wonders," it says, "how its obvious advantages should have remained so long undiscovered." Still it finds in the troubles of Tirah and Chitral a forlorn explanation of the remarkable phenomenon. It can only suppose that in recent years the Government has been too busy "battling with its imaginary enemies" on that side to notice that it was "letting slip golden opportunities" nearer to its hand. We leave the sense and the nonsense side by side. We take it that Lord Curzon will have little difficulty in deciding which is which. But it behoves sensible Englishmen to be on the watch.

As the *Times of India* and the *Pioneer* fail to appreciate the new project at any but a negative value, it may be interesting to look a little more closely at the arguments that find favour with the *Englishman*. In Tibet, it says, "a barbarous but intelligent priesthood"—certainly a curious compound—"has insolently defied all the advances of civilisation" (as we understand it), "has obstructed our attempts at opening up a profitable trade" (the argument to the pocket), "has turned back and sometimes cruelly maltreated every explorer who has ventured into its territories" (unbidden, and for no advantage of Tibet, so far as Tibetans can see). Nay, "the attitude of the rulers of Tibet towards the British power has in fact been all along that of a superior towards an inferior." Surely that lash should make the lion wag his tail belligerently. Like ourselves, the Tibetans do not know when they are beaten, and so have "something very like a moral victory" over us. Accordingly, "it would do our prestige"—that blessed word "prestige"—"all the good in the world if the priestly lords of Tibet were humbled again"—notwithstanding, apparently, that humbling leaves them still with "something very like a moral victory." Then there is the duty to be ready for the break-up of China, and contemplation of "the event of our taking possession of the country." An attitude like this is admirably illustrative of the jingo spirit that blazes in some Anglo-Indian imaginations.

An Indian correspondent writes: It may be interesting to quote the following passage from Major L. A. Waddell's letter to the *Englishman* to which you have already referred :—

Our Indian empire directly borders on Central Tibet by our frontiers of Bengal, Assam, and Upper Burma. Lhasa even now is within only about a ten days' ride from our Darjeeling frontier, and by a profitable railway up the Torsha-Choombi Valley, which I have advocated for many years, could be brought within three to four days from Calcutta. This with the addition of a railway from Assam up the Tsang-Po or Dehing, the natural waterway from the Indian plains to Central Tibet, and the already conceded extensions of the Burmese Railway from Kunlong Ferry on the borders of Yunnan through China to Suchan on the Yangtsze River, these would open up the heart of Tibet to India and Burma.

If this scheme should seem feasible to practical Englishmen it is to be hoped they will make up their minds to open their purses for the conquest, the construction of railways, and the maintenance of the new territory. To make India pay for the annexation of Tibet as India has been made to pay for the annexation of Burma would be breaking faith with the people of India. It would mean an increase of taxation and of poverty in India, with their inevitable consequences—famine, starvation and deaths. Half of the blunders of England in India are due to the fact that when military men have ambitious schemes on their brains they do not look at the cost.

Attention has already been drawn in INDIA to the probability that the Waziri raids into Afghanistan would impair our relations with the Amír; for thanks to the delimitation of boundaries, we are now responsible for the doings of these wild tribesmen. As was inevitable, the Amír has called upon us to keep them in order. A recent telegram says :—

A communication has been received by the Indian Government from the Amír of Afghanistan, in which the latter, speaking of the raid by Waziris into Afghan territory, says that he expects the British authorities to check such incursions, just as the Indian Government expects Afghan officials to prevent attacks similar to that made on a party of coolies in the Tochi Valley.

This gives pause even to so stout a champion of the "forwards" as the *Daily Telegraph*, which says: "The request is perfectly reasonable, but the difficulties in the way of stamping out the freebooting spirit on the North-West frontier are enormous." But why undertake responsibilities which cannot be fulfilled?

Though there cannot be said to be very much that is new in the Famine Commission's recommendations, there are some incidental remarks which are interesting as discounting the optimistic tone which is generally apparent. It is noted with congratulation that owing to the rise of the transfer values of the tenures of the cultivating classes their credit has expanded and they have thus been able to resist the famine by borrowing. But at the same time it is noted that the practice of storing grain by the cultivator as a precaution against famine is diminishing. So that now the cultivator emerges from a famine with a new load of debt. It may be asked whether the storage of grain by the peasant has not been abandoned more because of the effect of European methods for recovering debts than because of the export trade and the improvement of communications to which the Report attributes it. Moreover, the Commission is inclined to believe that the lowest section of the people, including the great class of day-labourers and living from hand to mouth, far from contracting is widening, and shows a greater liability to succumb to famine; and that the wages of these men have yet not risen during

the last twenty years in proportion to the rise in the price of food. It can hardly be doubted that the indebtedness caused by the famine, and the stern collection of the arrears of land-tax, which gives so good a budget, will still further increase this unhappy class.

The Famine Commission has (a correspondent writes) arrived at some general conclusions as the result of its enquiry, and has found that the incomes of the landholding and cultivating classes have risen with the rise of prices. But if this rise be owing to the depreciation of the rupee, one does not see clearly how the rise of incomes can be other than nominal. On the other hand the Commission admits that "the export trade and the improvement of communications have tended to diminish the custom of storing grain as a protection against failure of harvest." With reference to the landless labouring classes the Commission arrives at a finding which must fill every responsible administrator with apprehension :—

There always has existed, and there still does exist, a lower section of the community living a hand-to-mouth existence with a low standard of comfort and abnormally sensitive to the effects of inferior harvests and calamities of season. This section is very large and includes the great class of day-labourers and the least skilled of the artizans. So far as we have been able to form a general opinion upon a difficult question from the evidence we have heard and the statistics placed before us, the wages of these people have not risen in the last twenty years in due proportion to the rise in prices of their necessaries of life. The experience of the recent famine fails to suggest that this section of the community has shown any larger command of resources or any increased power of resistance. Far from contracting, it seems to be gradually widening, particularly in the more congested districts. Its sensitiveness or liability to succumb instead of diminishing is possibly becoming more accentuated as larger and more powerful forces supervene and make their effects felt where formerly the result was determined by purely local conditions.

Among the most interesting of the functions in Lord Sandhurst's tour in Kathiawar was the unveiling of a statue at Rajkot in memory of Mr. Chester Macnaghten, the great pioneer of education in those parts. For a quarter of century, from 1871 to 1896, Mr. Macnaghten was Principal of the Rajkumar College; and the pedestal of his statue bears the just inscription that it "is erected by his former pupils and other friends in Kathiawar in affectionate admiration of his high purpose, ready sympathy, modest and loving character, and in grateful recognition of his unselfish devotion to the noblest ends of education." Mr. Waddington, his successor, pronounced an honourable eulogium on him, recalling the difficulties of his task in illustration of the value of his achievement:

At the time when this College was first projected, there was a general distrust of innovation; the idea of gathering the young chiefs and nobles of this Province into a common centre of education and training was quite unfamiliar, and even at variance with many of the most deeply rooted customs and traditions of Kathiawar; there was the ancient jealousy of different rival States to contend with; and there were then none of the railways which now bring our students so rapidly from all parts of Kathiawar and Guzerat. Nor must it be forgotten that this College was practically the first institution of its kind in India, so that Mr. Macnaghten had no model in this country to whose history he could look for guidance or warning.

Mr. Macnaghten triumphed through sympathy, tact, and steadfast purpose; and, as Mr. Waddington well said, "this statue will remain an eloquent though silent witness to the value of those lessons of singleness of purpose, of devotion to duty, of uprightness and honour which Mr. Macnaghten set himself all his life to inculcate, and of which his own life was a conspicuous example."

We are glad to see that the Thakore Saheb of Gondal, who was educated in this country, is taking energetic steps for the spread of education in his State. He has now opened a college in the interests of the Girasias, whom he describes as "too proud to send their sons to ordinary schools and too poor to send them to any of the special institutions." To rescue them from their pitiable condition he has established a special college on the model of an English public school at a cost of about three lakhs and an annual expenditure of seven thousand rupees. It is to be hoped that his generous efforts will be crowned with success.

The death is announced (an Indian correspondent writes) of Mr. Dina Nath Sen, an able Education officer in Bengal. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* makes this sad event the occasion for a parable which has an obvious application to the state of things in India at the present day. The deceased is taken to the world of departed spirits and meets the great Duke of Wellington, who lived in a lonely hut. The Duke says with a sigh :—

There I live in that wretched hovel; every man has to build his house here before he comes. I built none. I was building up an empire on earth, and was so occupied with it that I forgot to build one for my own use in my permanent place of residence.

The great Napoleon says to Dina Nath Sen :—

Jesus Christ taught us that we were all children of the same father and that our duty was to nourish and help, and not to fight or subjugate.

The obvious moral is that a policy of Christian charity and trust is worthier and has a more abiding result than the policy of repression and coercion which finds favour in these days.

Mr. Justice Strachey's appointment to be Chief Justice of the North-Western Provinces is unfavourably received even by Anglo-Indian journals. The *Englishman* writes:—

It has remained for Lord George Hamilton to break through a rule which has hitherto been considered to be an unyielding one, namely, that an Indian Chief Justice is best selected from the ranks of those barristers who have had no previous connexion with India, and are consequently presumed to bring an unbiassed and unprejudiced mind to bear upon Indian judicial problems. Mr. Justice Strachey, who is, it is needless to say, a son of Sir John Strachey, is a comparatively junior member of the Bar, to which he was called at the Inner Temple in 1883.

The *Indian Daily News* it not less frank :—

The transfer of Mr. Justice Strachey to Bombay is, of course, a mere piece of gratitude for the result of the Tilak trial,—that ludicrous incident which, the more one looks back on it, shows more the extent of absurd panic in which the Indian Government, like an elephant who has nearly trodden on a hare, allowed itself to indulge. In Bombay, where there is a strong bar, Mr. Strachey's Allahabad experience did not render his position one of great comfort; and he will be much better off elucidating the law in his own way in a place of his very own. As an instance of the gratitude of the Government of India, the appointment, of course, is meritorious. And it will also illustrate to the cynical observer the advantage of belonging to one of the Indian official families.

The *Tribune* of Lahore publishes the judgments of the Chief Court of the Punjab in the appeals preferred by the Garhshankar "rioters." The convictions under sec. 188 of the Penal Code for disobeying orders to vacate the town have been set aside, but the convictions under sections 143 and 147 for "rioting" have been upheld. The decision has not given satisfaction in India or out of India. But we hardly expected any other result. It is not many generations ago since justice was biassed by political considerations even in England, and India has plainly not yet passed altogether beyond that stage.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab referred to the Garhshankar riots in a recent speech as follows :—

As soon as the sickness attacked a village the inhabitants were called upon to leave their houses and camp out in the fields, and at the same time arrangements were made by means of a cordon of police to prevent any residents of the infected village from going outside the village boundary, and also to prevent any outsiders from coming in. These arrangements undoubtedly caused a considerable amount of inconvenience, and even in some cases hardship, and it was not unnatural that those who did not fully understand the benefit of them should show their disapproval and even resentment at what to them seemed unnecessary harassment. Many openly said that they would greatly prefer to run the risk of becoming infected to being thus troubled. In one instance opposition went to the length of resistance, with the result that lives were lost and several persons wounded in the restoration of order. No one can regret this circumstance more than myself, but I am quite sure that the measures taken by Government were right and that those who opposed them did so from ignorance, and that it would have been wrong to give in to them.

If the arrangements made "caused a considerable amount of inconvenience and even in some cases hardship," if "it was not unnatural" that the people showed some "resentment at what to them seemed unnecessary harassment," and if they opposed the measures "from ignorance," was it necessary to punish the ignorant and harassed people with long terms of imprisonment, after some of their friends had been shot down in the streets? Would this have been done in any European town?

The Indian journals have, as was to be expected, given a hearty welcome to Dr. Fairbairn. The following passage from the *Bengali* is typical :—

We stand in need of the sympathy of the leaders of European thought. From such sympathy we expect important results. Having regard to the forces of reaction and their daily increasing strength, the good and the true in all parts of the world should form a community of brotherhood which would operate as a bulwark against the powers of darkness.

THE INDIAN CONFERENCE IN LONDON.

WHILE the Fourteenth Indian National Congress was meeting at Madras on Wednesday, the London Indian Society held the annual Conference of all Indians resident in the United Kingdom at the Westminster Town Hall. A large force of Indians, various in race, religion, and profession, together with a considerable sprinkling of English ladies and gentlemen, received with acclamation the venerable and revered President, Mr. Dababhai Naoroji. Elsewhere in our present issue we print a full report of the proceedings. The resolutions were carefully drafted to cover the main points of larger immediate interest. They were put before the meeting in speeches of remarkable ability, cogency, and lucidity; and several of the speakers rose to real eloquence, forcibly impressing the audience. It was very gratifying to observe the increasing interest in Indian affairs manifested by the English visitors, many of whom supported the various resolutions in emphatic yet well-weighed terms. Again there was heard a warlike note from some of the younger Indians, a not unnatural manifestation indeed, though not altogether politic; but it ought to serve the very important purpose of suggesting to the authorities some keener sense of the gross impolicy of exasperating men who wish nothing better than reasonably fair treatment for their countrymen and their country. It was impossible for any unbiassed mind to listen to the arguments urged by the speakers without being moved to profound sympathy, and without being amazed that policy should be so perverse as to create such grounds of complaint and to labour to repress instead of endeavouring to conciliate. Where, one could not but ask oneself, is that "effective association" of the Indians with Englishmen whereby we hope to aid them in "the task of working out for themselves a larger and a better political and social ideal"?

The Conference, in gratitude and with right feeling, passed an unanimous resolution of condolence with the family of the late Mahárájá of Darbhanga, who was a good and firm, if unostentatious, friend of the Congress movement. Mr. Naoroji moved the first resolution from the chair. It rests, as will be seen, on two bases. The first basis represents a claim that Mr. Naoroji has urged so consistently and steadily that the British public can hardly fail to be ashamed that the demand still remains unsatisfied. It is the claim of fulfilment of "the oft declared and pledged policy of the British people, through Acts and resolutions of Parliament and Proclamations of her Majesty the Queen, to treat Indians exactly as British subjects in this country." As Mr. Naoroji again said, it is surely sad to think how this solemn and reiterated promise has been allowed to degenerate to what Lord Lytton called a "hypocrisy;" and it ought to need no argument that the pledge should be redeemed without further delay. The second basis of the resolution is the distinguished "loyalty, heroism, and soldierly qualities" of the Indians engaged "in the recent war beyond the frontier and in all preceding wars." "In all preceding wars" observe, as well as in the recent campaigns. This is a point that is too often forgotten by Englishmen. They ought to remember that for every Englishman with Clive in the decisive battle of Plassey, there were two Sepoys. And so it has been all the way down the centuries of Indian conquest. The British Empire in India has been raised on the blood and bones and money of Indians in a very literal fashion. Mr. Mahtab Singh drove home the point effectively. On these two solid bases, then, the resolution demands "that Indians should be allowed commissions and command in the Indian army in the same manner and through the same methods as are open to Englishmen, by competition and training, and by promotion for distinguished ability and gallantry in the field." Possibly enough, as one speaker remarked, Englishmen may dislike to serve under the command of Indian officers. But it is part of the price we must pay for our Imperial boast if our Imperialism is to be anything but the pinchbeck article which Mr. Asquith scorned and repudiated. If again there is any truth in the contempt so freely poured upon Indian capacity—after the testimony of Lord Roberts there can be no more question of Indian valour—then there need be no hesitation in making some initial experiment, as Mr. Caine suggested, in a few of the lower grades at least. If there be question of Indian loyalty, Lord Roberts may again be cited. And there is always on record the manly and truly Imperial declaration of Sir Charles Napier: "We must mix with the people, give them justice, give them riches, give them honours, *give them share of all things*, until we blend with them and become one nation." Napier did not shrink from contemplating a time "when a half-caste or a full native can be Governor-General." Here is the true ring of Imperialism. And such was the practice justified by the experience of the Roman Empire. Is English heart and nerve less than Roman?

The second resolution is especially opportune. By it the Conference "deplores all legislation restricting self-government in India, urges the Government to withdraw the Calcutta Municipality Bill now before the Bengal Council, and affirms the principle that the extension of popular rights and of trust and confidence in the people is the surest foundation of British rule in India." Mr. Romesh Dutt was peculiarly well qualified to put this resolution before the Conference, and his skilful marshalling of the essential points carried his audience with him triumphantly. Why should India not be dealt with in this matter on a like footing with the colonies? As Mr. Dutt properly pointed out, it is through the full grant of self-government, "the greatest of English privileges," that the colonial empire is both prosperous and loyal. Mr. Dutt traced the history of the application of the principle to India from the first steps inaugurated by Sir Thomas Munro, and followed by Elphinstone and Bentinck down to the present time. Under Lord Northbrook was passed the existing Act regulating municipal government in Calcutta; and, as we have pointed out at length on previous occasions, it transformed Calcutta from a dirty and dangerous congeries of dwellings into one of the healthiest cities in Bengal or in India. Mr. Dutt, who can speak from personal knowledge of the facts before and after 1876, does not scruple to describe the city as a "health resort" for the neighbouring territory. There was no difficulty of any substantial character till the approach of the plague; and then the plague was most unjustly turned into an excuse for the overthrow of the existing popular system, and the erection of a bureaucracy out of impracticable materials. No wonder the audience smiled or looked dumbfounded, according to previous knowledge, when Mr. Dutt informed them that the twelve executive commissioners—only four of whom are to be elected by the ratepayers—are to receive Rs. 32 for each attendance. The object is to put all power in the hands of Europeans; and previous experience has shown that Europeans will not attend the meetings—a slackness that it is hoped to get over by the precious bribe of Rs. 32 a time. The bottom fact, however, remains beyond legislative manipulation. You cannot govern a city of 850,000 inhabitants without the willing co-operation of the people. Such co-operation is plainly not to be had on the terms of the Bengal Council. We print in another column a telegram announcing that a crowded and representative meeting, under the presidency of Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, has again declared the protest of Calcutta. And it is significant of a concerted dead-set against self-government throughout India that like repressive measures have been adopted in Poona and other important centres. It will not do. Home opinion, if we mistake not, will support unanimously the views so ably expressed by Mr. A. K. Donald in support of the resolution.

We have not left space enough to do justice to the dramatic and humorous eloquence of Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal, who moved the third resolution. This "condemns the new Sedition Law of India," and sets forth five most mischievous consequences necessarily flowing from that ill-advised legislation. These we have already explained and emphasised in many successive numbers of INDIA. This odious law creates invidious distinctions between classes; it fetters freedom of discussion of Indian measures by menaces that reach the outspoken Indian even in other countries; it represses unworthily the long-established liberty of the Press; it places in the hands of the magistrates, heads of the police, dangerous powers over the editors of newspapers, tending to professional deterioration and even to personal demoralisation under the menace of a demand for security for good behaviour, or in the alternative imprisonment with hard labour "without trial for any specific offence"; and it is "based on suspicion and distrust against the people, and is thereby

calculated to alienate the people and weaken the foundations of the British Empire in the East." The law is supplemented in practice by an extra-legal, if not positively illegal, institution of "Press Committees," which the Government of Bombay at least seems ashamed to own, for it throws the odium on the local collector. Mr. Justin MacCarthy once wrote very clear-sightedly :—

> You must have the voice of India; you must know what its populations wish for themselves, and claim for themselves; and, till you hear that voice speaking to you directly, as people unto people, you cannot possibly hope to govern with stability and with safety a great country like India. You cannot control India except by the consent of the various populations whom this Empire undertakes to govern. That is what we want. We want to win the consent of the different populations, to instil in them confidence in our intelligence, in our goodwill, in our anxiety to make them happy and prosperous; and when we have attained that consent, and can act on and with that consent, then, and not by any possibility till then, can we make a stable and a permanent Imperial State.

But if you gag the voice of the people at every turn, how are you to obtain that necessary basis for your "stable and permanent Imperial State"? This Conference will demonstrate not only the loyalty of the Indians but also how severely their loyalty is tried by our blind and deaf authorities in Calcutta and at Westminster. The situation will be profitably pondered by all who wish to see assured the stability and permanence of the British Indian Empire.

"THE QUEEN'S JUSTICE."[1]

A NARRATIVE has already appeared in England of the two trials of Malek Chand for the supposed murder of his daughter, but Sir Edwin Arnold has done well to give us in the form of a simple story an account of the narrow escape of the village watchman. The little book may be heartily recommended to all who wish to gain an insight into the difficulties which beset the administration of justice in India. Sixteen years ago Malek, the Chaukidar, already on bad terms with some of his neighbours, having accidentally killed his daughter and then in terror tried to make it appear that she had died of snake-bite, after being tortured in vain by the police was convicted of murder on the suborned testimony of his wife and child. He had not been defended by counsel, and a brilliant Calcutta lawyer, the late Mr. Manomohan Ghose, whose name should ever be cherished in India, feeling doubtful of his guilt persuaded the High Court to grant a new trial, with the result that the prisoner's innocence became clear and he was saved from a shameful death. The author of the book tells his readers that it shows the difficulties with which English judges in India have to deal. But there are not wanting some other points connected with British rule in India on which it throws a useful light.

In the first place it shows in a way there is no gainsaying the need of reforming the Indian police. The more simple admirers of British rule are continually boasting that the conquerors have guaranteed purity of justice to the conquered, that bribery is now unknown, that subornation of perjury is certain of detection, that judicial torture is a thing of the past; and with conscious pride the defender of our rule in India points to the great judges who have adorned the Indian bench, and the upright magistrates who in city and country alike have dealt out equal justice to all her Majesty's subjects. It is a fine picture, and many names rise to the lips in confirmation of it. But how seldom does the Indian villager come into contact with these high personages. For him the authority of the Empress is represented by the policeman, and the probity of that officer is hardly an article of faith. In this narrative we find the police taking bribes at every turn, forming their own theory of the crime and then schooling the prisoner's wife and child to give perjured testimony in support of it, tampering with the dead body to change the appearance of the wound and silencing a witness by threats; nay, we even discover them trying to extort a confession by torture—that is to say doing all those things which according to the admirers of our Indian Empire it has been our chief glory to have abolished. That there may be no suspicion of exaggeration, here is Sir Edwin Arnold's account of the Chaukidar's experiences on his way to prison :—

> In vain had he scraped together sixteen rupees and given them through Sham Mehtar, to the police. At Potkhali, on the bank of the little stream Ichimati, they made him fetch two rupees more to pay for their breakfast; and when he brought the money, he saw the chief constable examining the wound on the corpse, which had been made visibly larger. When Malek asked who had done this, a ferryman volunteered to him the information that the constable had been enlarging the hurt with the end of a twig of wild indigo. But upon being threatened with the stick by the police, this honest fellow timorously retracted his words. None the less did the police pursue, with illegal energy, their usual course of making good their latest theory of the crime. It was afterwards known that at this spot they drove date thorns into the quick of Malek's finger-nails and toe-nails to induce him to break his silent but resolute denial of the crime.

If corruption still flourishes among the officials with whom the peasant is closely in contact, its absence among distant magistrates and judges may appear of little value. To the rayat ground down by the land-tax and the salt-duty it may well seem that he has all the disadvantages of European and Asiatic government combined—the heavy cost of the first, more costly still when carried on by aliens, and the corruption of the second in the officers whose conduct affects most intimately his own well-being. Nor let it be thought that this police corruption is a thing of the past. Instances of misconduct are common reading in the Indian papers, and the crying need of reform is universally acknowledged by Anglo-Indian and Indian alike. Even at this very hour there is lying in an Indian gaol a boy of fifteen whose sentence of death has been commuted to one of transportation for life, but who is believed by the officials of his prison to be the victim of just such a police theory as was so nearly fatal to Malek Chand, the Chaukidar. If the boy who was lately convicted at Satara be indeed innocent the cases have a curious resemblance both in the unscrupulous obstinacy with which the police have carried on the prosecution and in the timidity and untruthfulness of the accused when in their hands. But if there has been a miscarriage of justice in this case as there was in the first trial of the Chaukidar, it is much more serious because here the High Court has also been deceived and the original conviction affirmed.

Incidentally the story from its very beginning, even before the death of the watchman's daughter, gives us a glimpse of another evil of British rule to be set against the flaming panegyrics to which we are so often treated—the increase of litigation and the power which the unscrupulous can gain by threatening legal proceedings. The just magistrate may sit afar off in his purity, a wonder and an admiration to the peoples, and yet the law may be a terror to the thrifty peasant desirous only to be at peace with all men, or to the villager who is too poor to make friends with the police and thus feels himself at the mercy of his richer neighbours. A man thus harassed thinks of the troubles he may have to encounter, the payments to be made at every turn and the doubtful result, and would perhaps have rather suffered even an unjust judgment at the hands of fellow-villagers than be forced to embark on this sea of expense which in the end will but bring him to a court presided over by an alien whose desire to do justice may be frustrated by his ignorance of the people or his incapacity to follow the intricacies of the Oriental mind.

It was such an incapacity that led Mr. Dickens, the magistrate at Nuddea, to sum up in a way that inevitably resulted in the conviction of the Chaukidar. In a European court and dealing with the motives of a European prisoner there might have been little to object to in his speech. But in India it nearly led to a terrible miscarriage of justice, for in the words addressed to the Court of Appeal :—

> Anyone who has any experience of criminal trials in Bengal knows that in the vast majority of cases, probably in more than 90 per cent., neither the prosecution nor the defence discloses the whole truth . . . . ignorant persons in this country when accused of crimes will not tell the truth, and will set up a false defence even though they are absolutely innocent of any crime.

But before the High Court and during the second trial the prisoner had the advantage of counsel to defend him. The trial, as Sir Edwin Arnold says, would have ended in "a lasting disgrace for British justice in India" but for the keen wit and the honest heart of a Native Calcutta lawyer named Manomohan Ghose, who is the true hero of the book. When he took up the Chaukidar's case after all had abandoned him he was performing the true

[1] "The Queen's Justice:" A True Story of Indian Village Life. By Sir Edwin Arnold, K.C.I.E., C.S.I. London: Thomas Burleigh. 1899.

function of the educated Indian as the interpreter between the Indian and the English mind, without which British rule would soon become impossible. There are some who see no danger in the separation of the two races and who especially despise the Indians who have taken advantage of the education offered them by their English rulers. They prefer that English magistrates in India should gain their knowledge of the people through the medium of a corrupt police. It may give pause to these to remember that the "Queen's Justice in India was also saved by the acumen and fidelity of a Calcutta lawyer from a stain which would have been indelible."

A BENGAL CIVILIAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

By Donald N. Reid.

MR. BUCHANAN, the judge of Kangálghar, was an eccentric type of the Haileybury College man. He was, however, blessed with a wife who was without exception the kindest-hearted woman in all Bengal. People seemed to think that she was thrown away upon Mr. Archie Buchanan; but if the manners of the stable were sometimes distasteful to her delicate womanly nature she certainly took good care to hide her feelings in the matter, since she invariably displayed the greatest devotion to her erratic husband.

Buchanan himself was nothing more nor less than a grown-up child; a child of middle-age who had only to fill in another year of service in India to enable him to retire on a pension of a thousand a year. Perhaps it was not Archie's fault that he still remained a child, since his own and his wife's fortunes made him independent of official patronage, with the result that he looked upon the world and its ways as a huge joke. He still retained the habit of playing with toys and with animals; but instead of going to bed with them, his toys and animal pets used to be displayed on the dining table for the edification of his guests. In "a nicht wi' Burns," before a mixed audience, it is necessary to ignore the most racy ballads of the poet; so, too, it is necessary for me to write in a restrained manner in describing a day with the judge of Kangálghar.

"Welcome to Kangálghar, Miss May. You have come at an opportune moment, as the station is full of planters and volunteers," exclaimed Buchanan as he rushed down the steps of his bungalow to help Miss Olive May off her pony. Mrs. Buchanan in her motherly way then took the girl in hand and conducted her to her room.

"I have heard a great deal about you from your sister Mrs. MacQueen, who is my own particular friend," said Mrs. Buchanan surveying Olive with approval. "But I am a little afraid of you, my dear," added the good lady in a joking way; "we are not accustomed in India to meeting young ladies who take life seriously."

"Pray don't be afraid of me, Mrs. Buchanan," said Olive with a laugh. "You will soon discover that I am as great a tom-boy as any healthy English girl of my age."

"I am glad to hear you say so, as I think that a young girl should take as much pleasure out of life as comes in her way. We don't breakfast till twelve as Archie does all his court work in the morning during this hot weather, so you had better take a long rest under the pankha. Here is a novel to amuse you."

At twelve o'clock the gong sounded for breakfast, and Olive made her way to the drawing-room, where she found the people of the house already assembled. She was now introduced to Mr. Meadows (the collector of the district), and to a Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert—a planter and his wife. This ceremony being ended, Buchanan, with a tartan hat on his head, led the way to the breakfast table, where, arming himself with a knife in one hand and a loaf of bread in the other, he proceeded to dispense hospitality in much the way that a pack of dogs are fed. "Who's for bread?" was the cry of this eccentric host. "Catch, Meadows," and a huge chunk went flying across the table to the collector. "Now, Mrs. Gilbert," was the only warning vouchsafed to that lady as a great crust went straight for her head—and so on all round the table.

To Olive May's surprise she saw her host fondly handling a couple of polo balls which were placed beside his plate. At last he threw one over to MacQueen, with the remark, "Did you ever see a finer ball than that, Martin, old chap? I hope you will play polo this evening."

"My ponies are tired after the hot journey across the sands, or I would play with pleasure," said MacQueen.

"Sorry I can't mount you; none of my ponies would carry you," said Buchanan, who then turned to Olive with a look of admiration in his eyes, and remarked, "Martin has told me of the plucky way in which you insisted upon riding that little *bad-zat* 'Godfrey' this morning. He is not a good polo pony, and never will be, as no living rider could induce him to play the game. I cannot imagine why Martin keeps the brute."

"He went very well with me," said Olive, "and Martin has promised to keep him for my riding; so there is no fear of his ever spoiling a game of polo again."

"That's a good thing," remarked Buchanan in a tone of great satisfaction, "as the little brute generally managed to knock over one or two ponies of an evening in revenge for being hustled. You must have ridden to hounds at home."

"Oh yes, ever since I was a little girl. Riding is the one form of amusement in which I let myself go."

"Then you are one of the right sort," said Archie in his patronising manner.

Little Mr. Gilbert looked across the table at Olive, and remarked: "If you care to come for a ride this evening, Miss May, my wife's horse 'Tidy' is at your disposal."

"Now, now, Gilbert, no shirking polo. We cannot allow you to entertain the idea for one moment that you are a lady's man, as you are perfectly useless for anything in this world but polo, pigsticking, and race-riding," shouted the irrepressible Buchanan to the recalcitrant member of his polo team.

"My husband rather fancies himself as a lady's man," said Mrs. Gilbert, bridling up in defence of her little man.

"That's more than anybody else does," declared the rude Buchanan. "Why, he has not two ideas to knock against each other on any subject but horses."

"Very well, Mr. Buchanan, I won't play you accompaniments again if you persist in being so horrid."

This threat had the desired effect of diverting Buchanan's attention from Gilbert, who had laughed good-naturedly at these little amenities.

"Now Peggy," shouted Buchanan to his wife, "I hope that you have invited the station people to dinner to-night to meet the fair Diana?"

"Don't be shocked at Archie's rudeness, dear Miss May," said Mrs. Buchanan, addressing herself to Olive. "He means nothing by it—it is only his way; and through time one gets accustomed to it."

"Peggy, you are too incorrigible. Whatever induced me to marry a cross-grained women like you?" said Buchanan with an aggrieved air.

"My money, I suppose," quietly retorted his wife, who had her own way of checking Mr. Buchanan's rude exuberance of spirits.

"That's one in the eye for Maister Airchie," whispered Gilbert to Martin MacQueen. "He will perhaps be quiet now, and allow us to finish our breakfast in peace."

"WHERE THREE CREEDS MEET."[1]

MR. OMAN has tried to present "a sketch of one aspect—the religious aspect—of the complex many-sided life of the natives of upper India, with its many amiable traits, its picturesqueness, its blind prejudices, its occasional fanaticism, and its almost complete absence of sympathy with Western feeling and sentiment." In this attempt he is more than usually successful. There is no brilliant writing, no exciting incident, there is positive dearth of epigram and all that commonly goes to the making of a successful story; for that is what this book is, an Indian novel, in which the principal characters are natives of India. Hence one began to read with some lack of interest, but the interest grew as one read until a certain sense of reality in the book kept one reading to the end without a pause. As the author reminds us, the European appears but fitfully in the story, just as he does in the real life of the Indian people in whose social system he counts for little except perhaps as a sort of erratic comet from far-off space, bringing with him weal or woe in some mysterious way. The plot is typical of Indian life in its dreamy fatalism and insufficiency of motive (from a Western point of view). The scene of the story is laid in the village of Mozang, a kind of

[1] "Where Three Creeds Meet": A Tale of Modern Indian Life. By J. Campbell Oman. (London: Grant Richards.)

suburb of Lahore. The subtle intermingling of religion with the daily life of the characters can only be appreciated by reading the book through; but a brief outline of the story may be interesting. Lateefun, a beautiful Indian girl of an ancient and noble but decayed Mogul family, is to be married to a co-religionist by name Hakam Ali. Her young cousin Abdulla is secretly in love with her, while Mahir Din, an *ekka-wala* and a bit o a roystering blade in Mozang, was not insensible to her charms as the acknowledged belle of the village. This same Mahir Din had formerly carried on an intrigue with a Hindu girl by name Moradun who had become a convert to Mahometanism for his sake. Hakam Ali, the newly-wedded husband of Lateefun, is carried off by the plague. The loss of his son turns Sher Afghan, Lateefun's father-in-law, into a kind of Ghazi fanatic, and he proceeds to spend his days in the exercise of vociferous religion. The story then turns on the devices of Mahir Din to win the hand of Lateefun, who meantime falls in love with her cousin Abdulla, and the awakened jealousy of Moradun, who in her turn is the lode-star of a Sikh carpenter. The love between Lateefun and Abdulla sprang up over some lessons in English which he came daily to give her. Into this complicated situation comes an English missionary, the Padre Sahib, whose favourite and most promising pupil Abdulla was. In order to escape marriage with Mahir Din, who by lavish bribes to a disreputable uncle of Lateefun's had gradually acquired a controlling influence in her mother's house, she embraces Christianity and marries secretly Abdulla, himself a Christian for this very purpose. Here is a portion of the good missionary's letter of joy recording the auspicious event:—

> At last, after my many weary years of conscientious if vain endeavour, it has pleased the Lord, in His great goodness, to permit me His humble servant, to be the unworthy instrument of bringing two souls—and two such souls!—to the knowledge and appreciation of the great work of redemption. Yes, with the blessing of God I have been enabled to baptise into our holy faith two Mahometans, a young man and a young woman. . . . . I feel at this moment, dearest brother, that I have not lived in vain.

Unfortunately, the amiable man adds, both the baptism and the wedding—for he married them—had to be performed with the *strictest privacy*, as the young couple dreaded persecution at the hands of their co-religionists. The writer went on to say that there was no fear of any personal violence under "our firm and upright Government," and promised to inform his correspondent later as to how the disclosure of the conversion, baptism and wedding was received by the Native and European communities. Well, it was very badly received by some of the characters in the story—so badly that tragedy ensued. The girl Lateefun was murdered. The cause was thought to be jealousy and suspicion pointed to Moradun—for the murder occurred when her lover, Mahir Din, was arranging to carry off Lateefun. The missionary, writing to his brother, thus laments the sad event:—

> Another most painful feature of the case [the other painful feature was that Abdulla, the newly converted, on hearing of his bride's murder, had promptly burnt his Bible] is that the poor girl has, I understand, been buried in the Mahometan burial-ground with Muslim rites. This greatly aggravates the tragedy, and I was dissuaded from raising any objection only from dread of the unpleasant consequences which might arise from the fanaticism of the people.

Truly the glimpses one gets of the missionary spirit are interesting. It turns out, however, that the murderer was old Sher Afghan, the fanatic father of Hakam Ali. "Did any dog expect me to stay idle with folded arms when the widow of my only son had become a degraded *Kafir* (infidel), and had entered into unholy marriage with an infidel? *I* did the deed—I glory in it. *Noor Allah! Noor Allah! Noor Allah!*" That was how he confessed the crime in open court. But the missionary learned wisdom late. He was taken completely out of his bearings by the fact that the girl was killed "because she became a Christian." So he went to console the mother, and there, good easy man, he had "a most painful and unexpected experience." The bereaved mother met him on the threshold of the house, and "with her white hair flowing in great ripples to her knees, cursed me in a way possible only to an Oriental."

The book conveys a useful lesson if a gruesome one. The closing incident is even more horrible. The Indian wife of a man named Ram Nath, who was a barrister and presumably no stranger to Western enlightenment, steals Moradun's baby and sacrifices it to the goddess Kali. The whole book is a strange and rather lurid picture of the mingled simplicity, superstition and fanaticism which make up a large part of Indian life.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, December 22.—Mr. Balfour, speaking at Edinburgh, said that Sir William Harcourt had shown the highest gifts for carrying on Parliamentary work. Sir William Harcourt was capable of giving and receiving hard blows, but he never permitted the bitterness of public controversy to overflow into private life. He never allowed the differences between parties to interfere with the objects in which the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition were equally interested—the dignity of that great Assembly of which they were members, and the greatness of the Empire of which they were citizens.

The rejoicings in Crete continued. In the morning Prince George visited the principal mosque, where he was received by the Moslem priests and notables, speaking in an encouraging tone to them. The Prince also had a private interview with the Mayor of Canea, a Mussulman, to whom he pointed out that the Moslem minority might have implicit confidence in him, as he had resolved to show no preference to either creed.

A meeting of the French Cabinet was held to consider the Dreyfus Revision question. Subsequently, M. Dupuy and the Minister of Justice discussed the means to be adopted for the communication of the secret *dossier* to the Court. Maître Mornard, the counsel for Captain Dreyfus, had given assurances that all desirable precautions would be taken with the object of preventing any disclosures of the contents, and in these circumstances it was believed the communication of the *dossier* would be made without further delay. The Premier had expressed his readiness to comply with the wish of the Court of Cassation that he would give evidence.

Friday, December 23.—A Treasury warrant was published in the *London Gazette*, establishing a rate of 1d. per half-ounce, or fraction of half-ounce, on letters posted in the United Kingdom for transmission to the British Colonies and possessions specified in the Post Office notice already published. The list included every part of the British Empire except Cape Colony and the Australasian colonies.

It was stated that negotiations would begin in Washington after the New Year for the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, with a view to the substitution of a new Anglo-American convention, guaranteeing American control, with neutrality, of the Nicaragua Canal in the event of its construction by the United States. Various concessions, it was stated, would be made to Great Britain for the abrogation of the Clayton - Bulwer Treaty. The preliminary report of the Nicaragua Canal Commissioners stated that the cost of the Ochoa dam, upon which rested the feasibility of the whole undertaking, could not be accurately calculated, as an undertaking so colossal did not admit of exact computation. The entire cost of the canal was put at 135,000,000 dols., and nearly 125,000,000 cubic yards of excavation would be required, exclusive of dams and embankments.

Saturday, December 24.—It was stated that the Field-Cornet of Johannesburg had been suspended on the representations of the British Agent, in connexion with the arrests of British coloured subjects. The policeman Jones, who shot the man Edgar in Johannesburg, had been re-arrested, and would be kept in custody until trial. A crowd of about 3,000 went to the British Vice-Consulate this afternoon and presented a petition to the Queen praying for the impartial trial of Jones and urging that the Transvaal Government should be called on to make provision for the wife and children of Edgar, and that protection should be secured to the lives, liberties and property of her Majesty's subjects in the town.

The British Consul at Zanzibar, receiving a deputation of Indian merchants, took occasion to give an authoritative denial to recent rumours of the cession of Zanzibar to Germany.

The American Peace Commissioners landed at New York and proceeded immediately to Washington. They were received at the White House by the President and Secretary of State, and Mr. Day formally presented the treaty with Spain, which the President received with a brief speech of thanks and congratulations. He said he felt able to assure the Commissioners that the treaty would be ratified by the Senate.—The American Government had ordered a gunboat to take possession of Wake Island, in the Pacific, in the name of the United States.—Two rival corporations had been formed to obtain from the Government a concession for the projected Pacific cable connecting the United Stated with Hawaii, the Ladrones, the Philippines, Japan, and China.

Monday, December 26.—It was reported that the Amír of Afghanistan had addressed a complaint to the Indian Government respecting a raid of Waziris into Afghan territory.—The brother and alleged accomplice of Damodar Chapekar, who was hanged for the murder of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand at Poona, had been arrested in the Nizam's territory.

The Tsung-li-Yamên made an official declaration to Sir Claude MacDonald that the Chinese Government would not alienate or part with any of the railways named in the Northern Railway Extension contract to any foreign Power.

This morning Prince George laid the foundation-stone of new Christian schools at Canea which were being reconstructed at the expense of the Tsar. The Admirals were present, and in the afternoon they returned to their flagships and put to sea. The citizens of Canea, by way of doing honour to the Admirals, had named five of the principle streets of the town after them and Admiral Canevaro.

Tuesday, December 27.—The secret *dossier* in the Dreyfus case was communicated to the Court of Cassation under conditions officially stated to "offer the guarantees required by the security of the State." It was said that the *dossier*—the mere existence of which was proof that illegality was com-

mitted at the trial of Dreyfus—would be communicated not only to the Court of Cassation but to Dreyfus's counsel, and doubtless to Dreyfus himself; for it now appeared certain that he would be brought back to France. What seemed also certain was that the danger in publishing it consisted not in any evidence which it might contain against Dreyfus, but in the fact that it recorded the names of secret agents of France abroad, with the means employed by the espionage bureau of the general staff for procuring the documents, most of which were now said to be forged, on which they based their conviction of Dreyfus's guilt.—Colonel Picquart remained in Cherche-Midi Prison. He refused to apply for his release, and none of his friends ventured to take steps for that purpose against his will. He was said to be well in health and in good spirits, only complaining that the prison yard left him insufficient space for exercise.

The President of the United States expected, it was said, to transmit the Spanish Treaty to the Senate on January 4, with a message recommending its immediate ratification. It was stated that 70 senators were in favour of ratification and 10 against, the remainder being uncertain.—The American Commanders in the Philippines reported that they had sent two regiments and a cruiser to Iloilo to protect American interests and maintain order. The battleships "Oregon" and "Iowa," *en route* for Manilla, had reached Callao.

WEDNESDAY, December 28.—It was stated that since Imperial penny postage was introduced on Christmas Day, 5,000 letters to the countries to which the reduction applied had been prepaid at the old rate of 2½d., while 36,700 had been properly prepaid at the reduced 1d. rate.

From St. Petersburg it was stated that a considerable increase of pay was about to be given to all officers of the Russian army, whose pay had hitherto been wretchedly inadequate; and a supplementary credit of 11,000,000 roubles would be assigned to the Minister of War for that purpose.

General Otis reported to the United States Government that General Rios, the Spanish commander, evacuated Iloilo last Saturday night, and that the insurgents occupied the city on Monday. The Spaniards had evacuated nearly all the southern island stations by orders from Madrid. The Americans were experiencing difficulty in getting the insurgents to surrender the Spanish prisoners, as stipulated in the peace treaty, and strong measures to attain this object were said to be contemplated in Washington.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MR. BIPIN CHANDRA PAL AT CRICKLADE.

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—I see the following words in the speech of Bipin Chandra Pal at Cricklade reported in your issue of December 16:—"They [the natives of India] had no vices. But though frugal and hard-working, though their land was fertile, though they themselves were free from all vicious habits that brought on poverty and destitution, the people were very poor." Now it is clap-trap of this kind that disgusts people who know the country and have its true interests at heart. Will Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal deny that at the root of most of the destitution of natives of India lie their pernicious caste customs of excessive expenditure at and after ceremonies on occasions of births, marriages, and deaths? Perhaps he would call these virtues, and not vices. He would perhaps also style a virtue the habit among Hindus, at all events, of making oneself responsible for ancestral debts, another prominent cause of the poverty among them. A French general who saw the charge at Balaclava said: "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre." Similarly, paying one's father's debts may be a magnificent virtue, but it is a luxury that poor people cannot afford to indulge in.—Yours, etc.,

A. Rogers.

With reference to this letter we have received the following communication from Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal:—

"Your correspondent has evidently mixed up the customs of the *classes* with the condition of the *masses*. Ceremonial expenses are in some respects rather heavy among the classes, with whom they are matters of family honour and prestige. But these do not affect the peasantry. Marriage, being a sacrament, must have certain ceremonial and social observances connected with it, but does not on an average cost more than two or three pounds at the outside. I have known of marriages which cost about two pounds, including a consideration of twenty-five shillings paid to the bride's father. Death ceremonies cost generally ten or twelve shillings, while about half-a-crown is sufficient to cover all ceremonial expenses on occasions of birth. I would not quarrel with anybody who can explain away the poverty of the Indian masses by citing these 'vices,' only the process is too 'occult' for me. Nor am I disposed to quarrel with anyone who thinks it 'vicious' for a man to undertake the responsibility of his father's debts. All that I can say is that notions of filial obligation differ among different peoples."

INDIANS IN ENGLAND.

IMPORTANT CONFERENCE AT WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL.

SPECIAL REPORT.

[From Our Own Reporter.]

The annual Conference of Indians resident in the United Kingdom was held on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 28, in the Westminster Town Hall, under the presidency of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. There was a large attendance of members of the London Indian Society and their friends.

The Chairman: Before we proceed to the work of the Conference I beg to propose a vote of condolence with the family of the Mahárájá of Darbhanga, by whose death British rule in India has lost a staunch and sympathetic friend.

Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt: Very few words are needed to second this resolution. The Mahárájá was known from one end of India to the other as one of the most enlightened and patriotic of men, and whenever any good work was to be done he was there to do it. It was my good fortune to be associated with him in the work of the Legislative Council of Bengal, and I must say he never lost an opportunity of advocating the cause of his country.

Mr. S. Ziauddin A. Balkhi supported the resolution, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Chairman said the Committee of the Indian Society had asked him to propose the first resolution in the following terms:—

"That in accordance with the oft-declared and pledged policy of the British people, through Acts and Resolutions of Parliament and Proclamations of her Majesty the Queen, to treat Indians exactly as the British subjects in this country; and considering that Indians have distinguished themselves by their loyalty, heroism, and all soldierly qualities in the recent war beyond the frontiers and in all preceding wars, this Conference is of opinion and urges upon the Government in the name of British justice and honour that Indians should be allowed commissions and command in the Indian army in the same manner and through the same methods as are open to Englishmen by competition and training, and by promotion for distinguished ability and gallantry in the field."

The motion, he said, divided itself into two parts. The first dealt with the policy of the British people in India. It had been clearly and emphatically laid down that there should be equality between Indian and all other British subjects. (Cheers.) Such a policy was laid down not only by Act of Parliament but also by the Proclamation of the Queen, and it was a very sad thing that the policy had been perverted by what Lord Salisbury called "political hypocrisy." (Hear, hear.) They took this opportunity of claiming that justice should be no longer delayed and that the Indian people should be treated with justice in accordance with the pledges which had been repeatedly given. (Cheers.) The policy had been laid down that they should be treated as British citizens; but unfortunately the practice of the authorities had been the reverse. ("Shame.") He now came to the second part of the resolution, and in regard to that he thought he could not do better than read a few extracts from opinions expressed by eminent men. He would first take some observations by Lord Roberts as to the manner in which Indian soldiers had behaved. The speech was made in reference to the Indian Heroes Fund, and Lord Roberts said:—"The proposal is to evince in a practical manner the recognition by the people of the United Kingdom of the gallantry and devotion which her Majesty's Native soldiers have displayed in many a hard-fought battle, and more especially during the recent arduous and difficult campaign on the North-West frontier of India. . . . I feel sure I have only to ask you to remember the deeds of heroism—heroism which could not be surpassed by men of our own blood—performed during the relief and defence of Chitral"—and here the noble lord cited other places—"when the defenders died to a man at their posts. When you remember those glorious deeds you cannot fail to realise how splendidly our Native soldiers of all ranks have behaved—whether Sikhs, Goorkhas, Dogras, Rajputs, Punjabis, Mahometans or even the tribesmen drawn from the very area of disaffection who, in many instances, rather than prove themselves untrue to their salt have fought bravely against their own kith and kin. On many occasions they have held out to the last when even their officers began to despair of reinforcements arriving in time and they have more than once died at their posts sooner than incur the disgrace of surrender. . . . . This fine spirit amongst the fighting races of India must not be allowed to die out. It is of inestimable value and a bulwark of strength to the Indian Empire—not indeed to the Indian Empire only, but to the British Empire as a whole." He need not comment upon those words; it would be sufficient for him to say that it would be an act of suicide on the part of their British rulers if they did not recognise such service as that and if they still looked upon the natives of India

as mere slaves and helots. (Hear, hear.) He had one more extract—from the words of Lord Curzon—who said: "He had seen also at first hand the Native soldier—the Sikh, the Goorkha, the Moslem, and the Pathan. He wished these brave men were better known here in Britain. Only to this ignorance could be attributed the utterly inadequate response which had been made to the appeal on behalf of the Indian Heroes Fund. He doubted if European nations had any idea of what a magnificent army our Indian army was. If ever the time came—which God forbid—that they were employed against a European foe they would confer a credit on themselves which perhaps few anticipated." In the short time they had at their disposal they would, he thought, be satisfied with few extracts, but he was bound to add that on another occasion Lord Curzon spoke of the fund for the relief of the families of those "who had fought so gallantly for us in the frontier campaigns of last year. In those campaigns those men had fought and died for us—had fought against men of their own race, of their own religion, sometimes of their own family, with just as much strenuousness and loyalty, as if they had been a British redcoat defending a British home. . . . He doubted if people knew what a magnificent army we had in India. In reality we held India, we defended her frontiers, we fought her battles by the aid of her sons." These then were the two premises on which the resolution was based—the promises and pledges of a hundred years and the gallant deeds, heroism and loyalty shown by Indian soldiers in fighting under British rule. And in this connexion he would quote a few words from a speech made by Lord Roberts before the London Chamber of Commerce, in which he said: "I rejoice to learn that you recognise how indissolubly the prosperity of the United Kingdom is bound up with the retention of that vast Eastern Empire." And again speaking at Glasgow, Lord Roberts said: "The retention of our Eastern Empire is essential to the greatness and prosperity of the United Kingdom;" and further: "But however efficient and well equipped the army of India may be, were it indeed absolute perfection, and were its numbers considerably more than they are at present, our greatest strength must ever rest on the firm base of a united and contented India." It being evident that the rulers of India thoroughly understood the position, was it not extraordinary that they should commit as it were an act of suicide? The people of India claimed not only justice; they also claimed gratitude, for upon Indian blood had the Britith Empire been built up and maintained, while thousands upon thousands of millions sterling had been contributed to the British Treasury. The people of India were always willing to acknowledge their gratitude for any good received from England, and in return they might fairly ask that England should show some gratitude for what India had done for her. In 1896 he had some correspondence with the War Office as to the conditions and qualifications of Indian candidates for army commissions. He received a very courteous reply to the effect that Indians were entirely excluded. It seemed to be the fact that Spaniards, Turks, Russians, and other Europeans were eligible so long as they became naturalised, but really British-born Indian subjects, who were repeatedly called "fellow-subjects," were excluded. ("Shame.") Surely that was not merely an injustice: it was an insult to the Indian nation. (Cheers.) He wrote again to the War Office on the subject and pointed out that the Queen's Warrant gave no indication of any reason for the exclusion of Indians; indeed he urged that there was no justification whatever for such exclusion, but he never got an answer to that. ("Shame.") However, he was not there to complain of that. They were quite willing to forgive and forget the past, but they did urge that the time had now arrived when the authorities of this country should wake up and understand their true relations with India and cease to act in a manner which must be suicidal to themselves and destructive to India. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Mahtab Singh seconded the resolution. He said they were not seeking any new legislation, all they wanted was the enforcement of the rights and privileges promised them by Act of Parliament and by the Queen's Proclamation. In 1833 an Act was passed which placed Indians on the same footing as other British subjects, and that view was endorsed by her Majesty when she took into her own hands the Indian Empire, for she said: "We hope to be able to fulfil our pledges to our subjects in every part of the Indian Empire." Now all they asked was the fulfilment of those pledges. They had, it was true, been told that Indians were incapable of holding commissions in the army. But why was that so? All they desired was to be allowed to compete for those commissions. They were willing to travel seven or eight thousand miles to enter into the competition, and surely if they proved themselves competent there was no justification for withholding from them the commissions. (Hear, hear.) It was suggested that they would not prove capable leaders of men, but although the British Government now-a-days gave them no opportunity of proving their ability in that direction, the history of the past fifty years showed that they had produced magnificent generals. (Cheers.) He believed indeed that the Mutiny might have been avoided had there been Native officers able to allay the suspicions of the Native soldiery, and he therefore insisted on the importance of having in future Native officers able to convey to their British colleagues the feelings of the rank and file of the Indian army. (Hear, hear.) He believed the refusal of commissions to natives of India constituted a source of danger by converting men who would otherwise be loyal and patriotic into discontented ones who would try to subvert the Government and plot against the thoroughness of the Empire. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. A. A. Khan supported the motion and insisted that it was absurd to suggest that while the Indians were good warriors they could not make good captains. In days gone by the Sikhs, Mahometans and Hindus had achieved brilliant successes, and surely they were not now effete. (Hear, hear.)

The Chairman said he had been asked to read the following extract from Sir George Chesney's "Indian Polity":—"But apart from any question of justice or good faith, it is surely safer as a matter of policy to have men of talent and ambition with you, their interests enlisted in our system as affording possibilities of high advancement, than that their only chance of escape from a life of obscurity and inaction should be felt to be in the subversion of our rule, and the anarchy attendant on such a revolution."

Mr. W. S. Caine said he felt no difficulty in giving hearty support to the motion. The British army in India was a very costly institution: each British soldier cost eight times as much as an Indian soldier, but he was not aware that he possessed any special efficiency for the work imposed on him. Indeed, the Indian soldier had proved himself the equal of the British soldier in fighting qualities, while the Sikhs and Ghoorkas had shown themselves better fitted for the campaigns on the Indian frontier. It must not be forgotten that we used Indian soldiers in other countries, and that when we had an especially difficult and troublesome campaign in some remote part of Africa we always borrowed some of our Indian troops. Again, Hong Kong was policed by Sikhs to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants. If the rank and file thus possessed our confidence, why should not commissions be given to natives of India? He was aware of no reason for the refusal except the reluctance of Englishmen to serve under Indians, and to successfully govern India we must break down the colour line. (Cheers.) Now let them as an experiment throw open a certain number of commissions to Indians, and if after a year's working the experiment failed it could be dropped. But let them only try it and he was confident that the British army in India could then be largely reduced. He would make a further suggestion: that some well qualified Indian should apply for a commission, and if refused appeal to the Law Courts; they would then get a clear definition of the law of the land, and if it were against them they would have good grounds for appealing to Parliament to alter it. He believed there was not a democratic audience in this country which would not enthusiastically support the resolution before the Conference. (Cheers.)

The resolution was then put to the meeting, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, C.I.E., moved:—

"That this Conference deplores all legislation restricting self-government in India, urges the Government to withdraw the Calcutta Municipal Bill now before the Bengal Council, and affirms the principle that the extension of popular rights and of trust and confidence in the people is the surest foundation of British rule in India."

He said that England had grown to be what she was to-day by reason of the adoption of the principle of self-government. To that principle also her colonies owed their prosperity, and it was the special boast of the present Government that our colonial empire was the especial creation of our present heaven-born Colonial Secretary. (Laughter.) Still the fact remained that if Canada, Australia, and South Africa were at this day loyal to England, it was because the institution of self-government had been extended to them. But in the case of India the measure of self-government meted out to it was very poor as compared with that enjoyed by the colonies he had named. And yet if they turned to the events of the early years of the present century they would find that in spite of brilliant victories in the field, governor-general after governor-general wrote that the disorder which prevailed was mainly due to the unsatisfactory state of things which prevailed in regard to civil administration, for "the condition of the people was one of extreme misery." Thanks to Sir Thomas Munro, to Mountstuart Elphinstone, and to Lord William Bentinck, high positions on the executive were thrown open to Natives; and it was through the adoption of a policy such as this that British rule in India was consolidated. (Hear, hear.) And when they came to more recent days, to the time when Mr. Gladstone sent out that wisest and best of statesmen, Lord Northbrook, they could not fail to remember the boon he conferred on them. They would not forget too how he strongly resisted the proposals made even in high quarters to bring about an entanglement with the Amir of Afghanistan. It was under his administration that representative government was introduced into India; and an Act, of which Sir Richard Temple was the author, was passed conferring on the ratepayers of Calcutta the high privilege of electing two-thirds of the municipal commissioners—one-third being appointed by the Government. That Act, although a small mercy compared with

that enjoyed by the people of England, was received with unfeigned satisfaction by the people of India, because it meant the introduction of a great principle into Indian administration. (Cheers.) During the last 22 years the elected commissioners of Calcutta had proved themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them. (Hear, hear.) They had entirely changed the condition of the city and made it one of the most healthy in Bengal—(hear)—while when last summer a few cases of plague broke out the authorities succeeded in promptly stamping out the disease, thanks in great measure to the action of prominent Natives in allowing themselves to be inoculated in the presence of thousands their fellow countrymen. One would have thought that after the experience of the last twenty-two years the time had come for some extension of the rights and privileges of self-government. (Hear, hear.) But the present Government was of a different mind; it was in fact taking away those privileges—("Shame")—and was vesting the powers hitherto exercised by the elected commissioners in a small body of twelve men, only four of whom were to be elected by the people. The result would be that instead of having popular government they would have despotic government. This change would be fatal to Calcutta even from a sanitary point of view, for such a city could not be properly ruled without the co-operation of the leaders of the people. He did not claim that Calcutta was an ideal city, but a great deal had been done in the past to improve it and much still remained to be done; and by taking away from the elected commissioners the powers they had so long exercised with moderation and patriotism and by investing them in a small body of men who would be paid fees for attending the Council, they were turning back the hands of the clock and were withdrawing the trust which had in the past been reposed in the people. That surely was a fatal mistake. (Hear, hear.) It was a policy which was to his knowledge arousing grave suspicion throughout Bengal. The impression was gaining ground throughout India that it was not possible to gain new privileges by peaceable methods. That was a dangerous lesson to teach the people, and it was not wise or safe to deepen the impression. (Hear, hear.) He only hoped that those who were in power would see the wisdom and expediency of adopting the policy embodied in the words of the resolution which he had the honou to move. (Cheers.)

Mr. Ziauddin A. Balkhi seconded. It seemed to him, he said, to be the irony of fate that while the Government were obliged to acknowledge the efficiency of the Calcutta Corporation they were seeking to deprive it of its rights and to declare that it was not worthy of the self-government which it had enjoyed for twenty-two years. The course of a nation's career was fixed by the policy of its rulers, and the new departure of the present Government must necessarily tend to the deterioration morally, intellectually and physically, of India. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. A. K. Donald in supporting the resolution said he did not believe that the English, Scotch, or Irish people would approve any diminution of the present dimensions of self-government in India.

Mr. R. C. Sen said that as one of a younger generation he looked at this matter from an entirely different point of view from that adopted by Mr. Dutt. He was one of those who considered that English justice was a myth and not an absolute reality, and that English Government meant the administration of slow poison to the people. Indians must rely on themselves and prove to the English people that they desired these reforms. History showed that England only helped those nations which themselves demonstrated their desire for assistance.

The resolution was then put and carried by acclamation.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal proposed:—

"That this Meeting condemns the new Sedition Law of India, (1) which makes invidious distinctions between different classes of her Majesty's subjects; (2) which seeks to restrict the free discussion of Indian measures by her Majesty's Indian subjects in England, by threats of prosecution on their return to India; (3) which takes away the liberty of the Press that has been enjoyed in India for over half a century, and substitutes a method of repression unworthy of the British Government; (4) which empowers magistrates in India, who are heads of the police, to demand security for good behaviour from editors of newspapers, to refuse such security when offered, and to send the editors to gaol with hard labour *without trial for any specific offence*; (5) and lastly, which is based on suspicion and distrust against the people, and is thereby calculated to alienate the people and weaken the foundations of the British Empire in the East."

He claimed that as an Indian journalist with twenty years' experience he was especially qualified to speak to this resolution, for he had travelled all over India speaking on a variety of subjects, and he well knew the danger he ran of being called upon by a district magistrate to execute a bond of good behaviour. It was difficult to propose this resolution without bringing oneself within reach of the law, for every line of it was seditious according to the law. (Laughter.) It brought into contempt the makers of the law, and he was bound to say that by doing away with the liberty of the Press they were doing away with a great safety valve. The case of the Natu brothers had recently shown how men could be imprisoned without trial for any specific offence, and he would point out how little reliance could be placed on the district magistrates. English magistrates had wrongly interpreted the law already, and how much more likely were Native magistrates to do so. The new law was certain to weaken the foundations of the British empire in the East. Many of them knew of the state of anarchy which prevailed before British rule obtained in India, but a new generation was growing up which had no such knowledge and which judged India by its present state. Among these the new law would arouse suspicion. Why should they be distrusted? It was only the act of a guilty conscience on the part of a Government which felt that it had not treated the Indian people properly. Discontent and dissatisfaction undoubtedly prevailed among the lower classes in India, and it was a serious accusation against Great Britain that after 200 years of beneficent legislation the ignorant classes still distrusted them. There were none so blind as those who would not see or so deaf as those who would not hear, and he could assure the Government that by their present policy they could not hope to win the sympathies and affections of the Indian people.

Mr. P. N. Chakrabutty seconded the resolution and compared the action of the Government in this matter to Turkish and Russian policy.

Mr. J. Baptista, in supporting it, dwelt upon the ignorance prevalent among the English people as to Indian affairs, and gave some very amusing illustrations in the shape of wild statements by men, women and children.

Mr. Martin Wood, as an English journalist, declared the new law to be a complete reversal of the principles of English law.

The resolution was then unanimously agreed to.

Copies of all three resolutions were ordered to be sent to Ministers of the Crown responsible for the administration of Indian affairs, and the proceedings closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

CONGRESS AND CONFERENCE.

SOME OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE "DAILY NEWS."

The natives of India who met yesterday at the Westminster Town Hall discussed a new grievance, or at least one which has not been recently urged. They protested against the exclusion of Natives from commissions in the Indian army. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji moved the resolution of protest, Mr. Caine seconded it, and it was carried unanimously. The courage and loyalty of the Indian troops have been often acknowledged by Lord Roberts and other British Generals. They were conspicuously displayed last winter in the Afridi war. The Indian army must be under Imperial control so long as we hold India by right of conquest. A Native Commander-in-Chief is hardly conceivable. But it is a long step from that to the refusal of commissions, which is hardly consistent with the Queen's proclamation of equality. Mr. Romesh Dutt, a distinguished member of the Civil Service, severely criticised the new Municipal Bill for Calcutta, which substitutes nominated commissioners for elected councillors. The Bill now before the Government of Bengal is justified on sanitary grounds. It is said that the representatives of the householders were indifferent to drainage, and obstructed necessary reform. The terrible outbreak of plague at Bombay has been attributed to bad drains and neglected nuisances. No doubt this is a serious matter. Our responsibility forbids us to let the people of India, from pure ignorance, religious prejudice, or sheer conservatism, destroy their own lives and the lives of their children. But that object might surely have been attained without depriving Calcutta of representative institutions. With the third resolution, which was directed against the new Press Law, most Liberals will agree. It is the stupid old policy of driving discontent underground and trying to remove it by repressing its outward manifestations. The counsels of panic always lead governments, as they lead individuals, astray.

THE "STAR."

The Conference of Indians in England which the London Indian Society convened at Westminster Town Hall yesterday represented many creeds and races, and discussed many topics. The pith of the whole matter comes to this—that India can be successfully governed only on the Liberal plan (too much neglected by some professing Liberals) of "trust in the people." Each of the three resolutions is reducible to this maxim. In refusing to Indians commissions in the army, in destroying local self-government in Calcutta and other large centres, and in gagging public writers and speakers by the new law of sedition, the Government of India exhibits a profound distrust of the people and jealousy of popular rights which has only to be understood in order to be repudiated by Englishmen at home. The complaint of educated India seems to be, not that our methods of administration are not advancing with the times, but that they move backwards. By all means, say Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and his party, let us have British rule, only let it be British rule on British principles. To bring about this consummation what is necessary is not a new declaration of policy but a loyal fulfilment of the solemn promises repeatedly given to the Indian people. In other words, the people of the United Kingdom, who desire justice and are well disposed towards their brown fellow-subjects, need to insist that the authorities in India, who are their servants, shall not violate the proclamations made in their name. Conferences like that which was held yesterday should help towards this end by making facts known. The hope of good government in India, as John Bright clearly saw, depends upon the rightmindedness of the British people.

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

We are much interested in the views of Messrs. Chandra Pal, Chakrabutty, Chunder Sen, Chunder Dutt, Naoroji and Company, better known as the London Indian Society. Their peaceful resolutions are innocent enough, but we are afraid they are too idealistic to be serious. Mr. Naoroji would open all the commissions in the Indian army to native Indians; Mr. Chunder Dutt wishes to establish a popular government in India, and Mr. Chandra Pal would abolish the new sedition law because it "makes invidious distinctions between different classes of her Majesty's subjects." We read these amiable resolutions and smile, and wonder if their movers have any sense of perspective. It cannot be that they know no better than to propose western laws for an eastern people; it must be that they have forgotten what the essential conditions of life in their (presumably) native country are. Or is it that the hand of Caine is in it all? We suspect that that Padgetty person has procured this demoralisation of the Babu intelligence.

THE "MORNING LEADER."

"N.T." wrote in the *Morning Leader* of Monday, December 26:—The Indian National Congress, which meets at Madras on Wednesday for its fourteenth session, was until the last year or two one of the best-abused institutions in the world. Its annual meetings afforded at least one-half of the British Press an opportunity for an amazing outpouring of Billingsgate, not indeed against the real Congress, whose history and proceedings are not studied by its critics, but against a purely imaginary body, in which the Tory leader-writer, not yet recovered from Christmas nightmares, beheld with horror the arch-enemy of British rule in India. Quite recently there has been, I think, a slight change for the better in the tone of British criticism of the Congress. But it is pretty certain that before the end of the present week we shall be treated to many examples of the good old style. In these circumstances it may be interesting to recall some of the points of Sir Richard Garth's account of the Congress, which was published by the *Law Magazine and Review* four years ago. The occasion for the article was supplied by an extremely venomous screed which the late Sir George Chesney had contributed to another periodical; and the peculiar value of Sir Richard Garth's unanswerable vindication of the Congress consists in this, that the writer is not only a Q.C., a Privy Councillor, and a former Chief Justice of Bengal, but also a stern and unbending Tory. *A priori*, therefore, he was hardly likely to form too lenient an opinion of an organisation designed to give expression to the educated Native view of Indian administration.

"Of all the many acts of injustice which have marked the conduct of the Government of India of late years, there is none, in my opinion," wrote Sir Richard Garth, "which can at all compare with their insolent treatment of the Indian National Congress. There is no subject, I consider, upon which the English Press and the English public have been so cruelly and persistently misled by the Government party." And he described Sir George Chesney's attack as an illustration of the sort of spirit which "animates the Government party." "It illustrates very forcibly the spirit of intolerance to which I have alluded, and I can hardly conceive anything more calculated to wound the feelings and excite the disaffection of a people keenly sensitive to ridicule and insult than the tone and language in which they are spoken of in that article." Accordingly, Sir Richard Garth proceeded to consider in great detail two questions: (1) Who are the gentlemen who compose the Congress? and (2) What have they done to deserve Sir George Chesney's obloquy and insults?

I can only give here Sir Richard Garth's conclusions. The first of these two questions he answered as follows: "The Indian National Congress is a large, influential, and important assembly of earnest and patriotic gentlemen, who, since 1885, have at the close of each year met at one or other of the large centres in India, such as Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay, to discuss their political views and opinions." He found that the Congress consisted of "delegates from every part of India, who are duly elected at a number of divisional headquarters"; that in 1888 fully three millions of men took a direct part in the election of these delegates; and that the constitution of the Congress was "thoroughly representative" not only as regards the various ranks and the professions of the delegates, but also in point of religion. So far as Bengal was concerned, Sir Richard Garth added: "I am personally acquainted with several of these gentlemen. They have often been guests at [illegible] I have met them constantly in the best Native [illegible], at Government House levées, and at [illegible]ties." Sir G. Chesney had spoken of [illegible]ress as an isolated class. "They [illegible]hard replied, "than the members [illegible] any other club in London; and [illegible] any Native gentlemen of high [illegible]h thoroughly favourable to its [illegible] taking as direct and open a [illegible]s they would have wished to [illegible]lity which the Government [illegible]t."

So much for what the Congress is. And Sir Richard Garth's answer to the question what the supporters of the Congress had done was no less downright: "I will tell you," he said, "what they have done. They have dared to think for themselves; and not only for themselves but for the millions of poor, ignorant people who compose our Indian Empire. They have been content to sacrifice their own interests, and to brave the displeasure of Government, in order to lend a helping hand to those poor people. They have had the courage and the patriotism to denounce abuses which have disgraced our Indian rule for years past, which have been condemned by public opinion in India and in England, and to which the Indian Government appear to cling with a tenacity which seems utterly inexplicable. They have dared to propose reforms which, despite the resistance of the Government, have been approved by Parliament, and to endeavour to stay that fearful amount of extravagance which has been going on in India for years past, and has been the means, as some of our best and wisest counsellors consider, of bringing our Eastern Empire to the verge of bankruptcy." And at the end of his article Sir Richard Garth wrote: "It seems to me that, so far from being in any way objectionable, the Congress affords an open, honest, and loyal means of making the views and wishes of the most intelligent section of the Indian people known to the Government." I must apologise for the length of these extracts, which, however, convey more forcibly than anything which I could write a description and a vindication of the great representative body which is now once more making its appeal to the justice-loving people of the United Kingdom. The newspapers of the next few days will contain telegraphic summaries of the proceedings of the fourteenth Congress, under the presidency of Mr. Ananda Mohun Bose, and it is important that the readers of the *Morning Leader* should bring to the perusal of those telegrams a reasonable conception of the composition and the work of the Congress. They can have no more trustworthy guide than the late Chief Justice of Bengal.

THE PROPOSED DESTRUCTION OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

IMPORTANT MEETING IN CALCUTTA.

REPRESENTATIVE MEMORIAL ADOPTED.

[By Cable, from our own Correspondent.]

Calcutta, December 27.

A crowded and enthusiastic meeting has been held here to protest against the Calcutta Municipal Bill. Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee presided. The marwaris [*i.e.*, influential merchants and bankers], tradesmen and other ratepayers of Calcutta attended the meeting. A memorial against the proposed new constitution of the Calcutta Municipality was adopted.—*By Indo-European Telegraph Co.'s Cables.*

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

At a crowded meeting at Heavitree, Exeter, on December 16, a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee in a speech on current politics referred to the illiberal way in which the present Government was ruling in India, and said the essence of Liberalism at home and abroad was "trust in the people."

In addition to the meetings announced last week, meetings have been arranged for next year at the following places:—

Jan.	11 ..	Torquay.
,,	24 ..	Burton-on-Trent.
,,	25 ..	Padiham.
,,	26 ..	Liverpool.
,,	30 ..	Wigan.
Feb.	2 ..	Accrington.
,,	3 ..	Skipton.
,,	6 ..	Wibsey.
,,	7 ..	Bradford.
,,	8 ..	Elland.

On Tuesday last, December 27, Miss Ernestine Evans Bell (daughter of the late Major Evans Bell, author of "Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy," and many other works on the Indian States) was married to Mr. Herbert H. Mills, M.R.C.S., of St. Mary Abbott's Terrace, Kensington.

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